servemontana
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

2013 AmeriCorps State Grant Application
School Turnaround Grant Request for Proposals

Thank you for your interest in a School Turnaround AmeriCorps Grant. This packet outlines the process for applying for 2013 AmeriCorps grants funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) through the Montana Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS). The Montana Commission on Community Service (Commission) serves as the body to recommend funding to the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Governor's Office of Community Service

The Governor's Office of Community Service and the Montana Commission on Community Service were established in 1993 by the Montana Legislature to administer grants under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. Under the advice of the Montana Commission on Community Service, the Governor's Office of Community Service grants funds to Montana AmeriCorps State programs through competitive grant processes; encourages citizens of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to engage in service; involves youth in the life and work of communities; promotes volunteerism in emergency management and preparedness; and helps to strengthen and expand volunteer opportunities for all Montanans.

Within each of the defined Focus Areas the Montana Commission on Community Service has identified three initiatives to be addressed through AmeriCorps service in the State. Applications demonstrating efforts toward addressing one or more of the Montana initiatives will be given priority when compared to equal applications not addressing any of the initiatives.

Montana Expectations

Programs operating in Montana must address all of the Montana Expectations.

- ✓ Inclusive in the design and delivery making the program accessible to individuals with disabilities
- ✓ Collaborative approach to planning, design, and the delivery of the program
- ✓ Ability of the organization to administer federal grants
- ✓ Address rural, underserved or areas of extreme poverty not currently served by AmeriCorps programs
- ✓ AmeriCorps members trained and prepared to respond to disasters in their community
  - o Applicants are required to provide AmeriCorps members with disaster response or recovery training. Applicants should briefly describe the type of training their members will receive with regard to disaster response or recovery and how they anticipate members will be able to contribute in the case of an emergency. Training need not be intensive, there is no requirement that members receive certification and members are not required to serve in response to a disaster. Members are encouraged to support their local community but the only requirement is that members receive training in disaster response/recovery and that applicants describe how this training may be utilized.

Montana AmeriCorps State Process

To be eligible for consideration, an applicant must meet the intent of all the requirements listed in this packet. The Governor's Office of Community Service will determine whether the applicant's Letter of Intent, Readiness Self-Assessment, and Proposal comply with the requirements. The applicants will be reviewed to make sure they meet the standards of responsibility in accordance with ARM 2.5.407. Such a determination may be made at any time during the procurement process if information surfaces that would result in the determination of non-responsibility. Applicant responses that do not meet the full intent of all requirements listed in this RFP may be deemed unresponsive and not considered in funding decisions.

Montana Commission on Community Service and the Governor's Office of Community Service Appeals Process: http://serve.mt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Appeals-Process-Updated-10.18.10.pdf

For more information about starting up an AmeriCorps State program or National AmeriCorps programs, please visit www.americorps.gov, www.nationalservice.gov, and http://s3.amazonaws.com/resource_center_video/taag/program-start-up/index.html.

Application Process

Applicants must submit:

- **Letter of Intent (All Applicants),**
- **Readiness Self-Assessment (New Applicants Only)***
- **Current A-133 audit or equivalent (New Applicants Only)***

The Letter of Intent and Readiness Assessment are attached at the end of this RFP all documents should be submitted electronically to serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST March 25, 2013**. *Note: If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-5547.*

*Organizations that have not received funding in any of the previous five years for an AmeriCorps State or National program are considered new applicants

The Governor's Office of Community Service will invite compliant applicants to continue with the application process. Applicants asked to move forward with the application process will use the AmeriCorps State Application Instructions to complete their full application.

Applicants must complete and submit their application in **eGrants,** the online grant program used by the Corporation for National and Community Service.
http://www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/

The full application packet will include the:

- **AmeriCorps State Application** submitted in **eGrants**,
- **Cover Letter**, and
- **Letters of support**

The Cover letter is attached at the end of this RFP. Both the Cover letter and letters of support should be submitted electronically to serve@mt.gov. To be considered the full application packet must be submitted to the Governor's Office of Community Service by **Noon MST April 8, 2013**. *Note: If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-5547 to confirm the information was received.*

Applicants must be available for an interview on **April 15, 2013**.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance will be available to all applicants from March 11 to April 8, 2013. Questions should be submitted via email to serve@mt.gov. All questions and answers will be posted publically in an FAQ on the ServeMontana website at http://serve.mt.gov/funding/. Questions will be dated with the most recent added to the top.

2013 AmeriCorps State Grant Application
School Turnaround Grant Timeline

March 11   Montana formula request for proposal posted
                  Technical assistance period opens

March 25   Letter of intent (all applicants), readiness self-assessment and
                  current A133 or other audit (new applicants only) due to OCS
                  by noon MST

April 8   Application, cover letter (all applicants), and letters support
                  due to OCS by noon MST
                  Technical assistance period ends

April 15   Applicant interviews with Grant Review Workgroup

April 18   Full Commission vote on the funding recommendations
                  OCS notifies applicants of Commission funding
                  recommendations

April 22   Final revised applications due in eGrants by noon MST

Mid-July   Successful applicants will be notified

School Turnaround initiative

The School Turnaround AmeriCorps initiative is a collaborative effort by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to increase educational achievement, high school graduation rates, and college readiness for students in our nation's lowest-performing elementary, middle, and high schools.

The mission of CNCS is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic participation through service and volunteering. CNCS—through its AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs and through the Social Innovation Fund—has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action. CNCS seeks to direct the power of national service to solve a common set of challenges, expand opportunities for all Americans to serve, build the enduring capacity of individuals, organizations, and communities to effectively use service and volunteering to solve community problems, and embrace innovative solutions that work.

The mission of ED is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access. One of ED's key priorities is supporting state and local efforts to turn around the nation's lowest-performing schools. Through programs including School Improvement Grants (SIG), Race to the Top (RTT), and Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility, ED has focused resources and support on these schools, and states and local educational agencies (LEAs) have committed to making dramatic change in these schools to improve student achievement and increase graduation rates.

ED's SIG program provides grants to state educational agencies (SEAs) that make competitive subgrants to LEAs that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to use the funds to provide adequate resources in order to raise substantially the achievement of students in the state's lowest-performing schools. Under the final SIG requirements, set forth in 75 FR 66363 (Oct. 28, 2010), schools eligible for SIG funds generally include the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I[1] schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring; Title I and Title I-eligible secondary schools with graduation rates less than 60 percent over a number of years; and the lowest-achieving five percent of a state's secondary schools that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds. In addition to low student performance and graduation rates, these schools are also characterized by high rates of disciplinary challenges and low academic expectations.

The SIG program, as redesigned by the Obama Administration in 2009, has invested up to $6 million per school over three years at more than 1,300 of the nation's lowest-performing schools. LEAs and schools receiving SIG funds commit to implement rigorous school intervention models that include, for example, replacing the school leader, increasing learning time, providing on-going, high-quality job-embedded professional development, and promoting the continuous use of student data to inform and differentiate instruction in order to meet the academic needs of individual students.

As of January 1, 2013, 34 states and the District of Columbia are approved for ESEA flexibility, under which ED has granted waivers from certain requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, in order to support state and LEA efforts to move forward with reforms that will improve student achievement and increase the quality of

---

[1] "Title I" refers to Title I, Part A of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. §§ 6301 et seq.).

instruction. In order to receive ESEA flexibility, a state is required to, among other things, identify the lowest-performing five (5) percent of Title I schools in the state as "priority schools" and implement meaningful interventions in these schools for at least three years, similar to the requirements of the SIG program.[2] States are beginning to implement interventions in their priority schools in the 2012-2013 school year, and must implement interventions in all priority schools by the 2014-2015 school year.

School Turnaround AmeriCorps, in coordination with local school and LEA turnaround efforts under SIG and ESEA flexibility, will support schools and communities in improving student performance. The program reflects CNCS's and ED's commitment to increasing opportunities for children in disadvantaged communities through high-quality education. School Turnaround AmeriCorps also expands on the efforts of Together for Tomorrow (TFT), a cooperative initiative among ED, CNCS, and the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships to boost community engagement in turning around the nation's lowest-performing schools.

In accordance with the Obama Administration's emphasis on open government, CNCS and ED are committed to openness and transparency in grantmaking. The following information pertaining to this competition will be published on the CNCS website (http://nationalservice.gov/about/open/grants.asp) and the ED website (http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html) within 90 business days after all grants are awarded:

> • A list of all applications submitted that complied with submission requirements.
> • Executive summaries of all compliant applications prepared by the applicants as part of the application.
> • Copies of the SF424 and Program Narrative submitted by successful applicants.

Publication of this Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity (Notice) does not obligate CNCS or ED to award any specific number of grants or any specific amount of funding.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Purpose of School Turnaround AmeriCorps Funding
This Notice invites applications for AmeriCorps grants from eligible organizations that improve academic outcomes for students in eligible schools. Section III.A. outlines the organizations eligible to apply. For purposes of this Notice, eligible schools are defined as Tier I and Tier II schools that are receiving SIG funds to implement one of the four SIG models[3]; Tier I and Tier II schools that, at the time of the applicant's application submission, have been formally notified that they will receive SIG funds to implement a SIG model in the 2013-2014 school year; and priority schools that are implementing in the 2012-2013 school year or will implement in the 2013-2014 school year interventions aligned with the ESEA flexibility turnaround principles[4]. Grants will fund projects that serve eligible schools not currently

---

[2] Additional information about ESEA flexibility is available in the document ESEA Flexibility, June 7, 2012 (available at http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility).

[3] For a listing of SIG schools, please visit http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/awardedschls.xls. As described in this Notice, only those SIG schools that are Tier I or Tier II schools and are implementing one of the four SIG models may be served by grantees.

[4] To be eligible to receive services by programs funded through School Turnaround AmeriCorps grants, schools must have been identified as a priority school by their SEA at the time of the applicant's application submission and must either (1) be implementing interventions aligned with

served by a national service program (e.g., AmeriCorps State and National, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), Foster Grandparents, etc.), or will support expansion and better coordination of existing national service activities in those schools. All projects funded under this Notice are expected to improve student academic performance, academic engagement, attendance outcomes, or some combination thereof, in eligible schools.

Grants will fund projects that address multiple student needs and are aligned with comprehensive school turnaround plans. All grants funded under this Notice must include one or more of the following:

> • Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.
> • Establishing a school culture and environment that improve school safety, attendance, and discipline and address other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs.
> • Accelerating students' acquisition of reading and mathematics knowledge and skills;
> • Increasing graduation rates through strategies such as early warning systems, credit-recovery programs, and re-engagement strategies.
> • Increasing college enrollment rates through college preparation counseling assistance to include completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and college applications, and educating students and their families on financial literacy for college; or
> • Supporting school implementation of increased learning time.[5]

These six strategies are aligned with those required of SIG schools in implementing their intervention models, as well as the requirements associated with priority schools that are implementing the turnaround principles under ESEA flexibility. In addition, these strategies are based on research on turning around the lowest-performing schools.[6]

Leveraging community, LEA, and school-level support systems can be an important component in comprehensive turnaround efforts. As such, CNCS and ED encourage applicants to partner with multiple eligible schools within an LEA and coordinate turnaround efforts among multiple school sites. Doing so will enable applicants to take advantage of economies of scale, and aid in changing community, LEA, and school cultures.

To maximize the impact of the public investment in national service and school improvement, School Turnaround AmeriCorps grants will be awarded to eligible organizations that use data and work directly with school leaders to identify needs and develop interventions that are aligned with LEA and school turnaround efforts.

---

the turnaround principles in the 2012-2013 school year or (2) are committed to implement interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in the 2013-2014 school year. Lists of priority schools are posted on the website of each state educational agency.

[5] Increased learning time means using a longer school day, week, or year schedule to significantly increase the total number of school hours to include additional time for (a) instruction in core academic subjects including English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography; (b) instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education, including, for example, physical education, service learning, and experiential and work-based learning opportunities that are provided by partnering, as appropriate, with other organizations; and (c) teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects. (75 FR 66367)

[6] For a summary of research supporting the interventions implemented under SIG and ESEA flexibility, please visit http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/college-career-ready.pdf.

To be funded under this Notice, programs must use AmeriCorps members to improve educational outcomes for students in eligible schools through evidence-informed interventions, as defined in this Notice (Appendix A). An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust.

B. National Performance Measures

The Serve America Act (SAA) emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focusing on a core set of issue areas. CNCS's five-year Strategic Plan establishes an ambitious set of objectives that support the mission and goals to implement the SAA. National Performance Measures allow CNCS to demonstrate aggregated impact of all its national service programs, including AmeriCorps State and National. National Performance Measures include Priority and Complementary Measures. This Notice focuses on a specific set of educational performance measures (Section IX). Applicants are required to use the specific priority education performance measures outlined in this Notice to assess the outcomes of their funded project. For more information, please refer to the National Performance Measure Instructions for this Notice.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Funding Available

CNCS and ED expect to make $5 million available for this grant competition. The actual level of funding is subject to the availability of full-year appropriations.

B. Award Amount

Awards will provide both operating funds and AmeriCorps member slots. Award amounts will vary. Grant amounts may be lower than the requested amount. Applicants are encouraged to apply for a minimum of 20 Member Service Years (MSYs). CNCS and ED expect to make annual grant awards of between $250,000 and $1,000,000 for cost reimbursement grants and between $16,000 and $80,000 for education-award fixed-amount grants. For award size limitations, please refer to the maximum cost per MSY requirements (Section III.D.3-4).

C. Award Period

Unless otherwise specified, the grant generally covers a three-year project period. In approving a multi-year project period, CNCS generally makes an initial award for the first year of operation. In most cases, the application is submitted with a one-year budget. Continuation funding for year 2 and year 3 is contingent upon satisfactory performance, demonstrated capacity to manage the grant, compliance with grant requirements, and availability of federal appropriations. CNCS and ED reserve the right to adjust the amount of a grant award for subsequent years, or elect not to continue funding on any or all of these bases.

D. Types of Grants

The purpose of this notice is to fund AmeriCorps state grants operating in the state of Montana. Proposals that would place AmeriCorps members in more than one state should apply directly to CNCS for a National Direct grant. Indian Tribes may apply through a State Commission, or directly to CNCS.

E. Types of Funding
AmeriCorps grants can be awarded on a cost reimbursement or fixed-amount basis.

1. Cost Reimbursement Grants
Cost reimbursement grants fund a portion of program operating costs and member living allowances with flexibility to use all of the funds for allowable costs regardless of whether or not the program recruits and retains all AmeriCorps members. There is a grantee cost share requirement for these grants. These grants are awarded to organizations operating in a single state or in more than one state.

2. Education Award Fixed-Amount Grants (EAP)
Programs apply for a small fixed-amount per MSY and use their own resources to cover all other costs. Programs can access funds under the grant based on the number of members they enroll. EAPs may enroll less-than-full-time members in addition to full-time members. There are no match or financial reporting requirements, but programs must raise significant funds through other sources to operate the program. CNCS does not encourage organizations that do not already operate an AmeriCorps program to apply for a fixed-amount grant.

III. ELIGIBILITY

A. Eligible Organizations
Public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations; schools or LEAs; institutions of higher education; government entities within states (e.g., cities, counties); Indian Tribes; and labor organizations, are eligible to apply. Partnerships and consortia of these entities are encouraged to apply, with one entity of an applying partnership or consortia designated as the lead applicant.

Organizations that have been convicted of a Federal crime are disqualified from receiving the assistance described in this Notice. Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Action of 1995, an organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(4), that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.
Existing AmeriCorps grantees may apply; however, receiving funding previously from CNCS or another federal agency is not a prerequisite to applying under this Notice. Organizations that have never received funding from CNCS or AmeriCorps are eligible to apply for the grants described in this Notice. New organizations should submit applications with the understanding that the general practice is to award no more than 50 member slots for new grantees.

1. State Commission
Organizations proposing a project that operates in only Montana must apply to this competition through the Governor's Office of Community Service.

2. Multi-State Applicants
Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state or territory apply directly to CNCS.

3. Indian Tribes
Indian Tribes may apply through the Office of Community Service, or directly to CNCS.

B. Match Requirements

1. EAP
There is no match requirement for fixed-amount grants. However, the fixed-amount grant does not cover all costs. Fixed-amount grantees provide the additional resources needed to operate the program, but are not required to track or report on them.

2. Cost Reimbursement Grants (non-fixed amount)
A first-time successful applicant must provide a grantee share of 24 percent of the total costs for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four for grantees that successfully compete for new awards, the grantee share gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 CFR § 2521.60. For purposes of determining the applicable match schedule, CNCS will assess match level based on the particular grant and project in the application and not the legal applicant. Thus one legal applicant may be able to receive funding for separate projects under separate grants subject to different match levels. See 45 CFR § 2522.340 for more information about this topic.

Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act (NCSA) requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds to CNCS on the Federal Financial Report.

3. Alternative Match
Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative match requirements that increase over the years to 35 percent instead of 50 percent as specified in the regulations at 45 CFR § 2521.60(b). To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed project is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined in the Application Instructions. Single-state applicants must contact the Commission for submission instructions.

C. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM)
Applications must include a DUNS number and an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. All applicants must be registered with the Systems for Award Management (SAM).

DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/. The website indicates a 24-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers. However, we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date. Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by following instructions found here: http://smallbusiness.dnb.com/establish-your-business/12334338-1.html.

SAM combined the federal procurement system and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one new system. SAM collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid registration, which must be renewed annually.

Applicants that are not already registered with SAM should begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a DUNS number in order to register with SAM. To register online go to https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/.

D. Other Requirements

1. Member Living Allowance
The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members that is between $12,100 (minimum) and $24,200 (maximum) per member except as noted below. A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage.

Programs are not required to provide a living allowance for members serving in less than full-time terms of service. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to a less than full-time member, it must comply with the maximum limits in the Table below. For cost-reimbursement grants, the amount must be included in the proposed budget as either CNCS or grantee share.

While fixed-amount grant applicants are not required to submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements for full-time members and the maximum limits for less than full-time members if paying a living allowance. Fixed-amount grant applicants should indicate in the narrative if they are paying a living allowance and specify the amount.

Table 1: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-Time	1700	$12,100	$24,200
One-year Half-time	900	n/a	$12,800
Reduced Half-time	675	n/a	$9,600
Quarter-time	450	n/a	$6,400
Minimum-time	300	n/a	$4,260

2. Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements
(for national service programs existing prior to September 21, 1993)
If a program existed prior to September 21, 1993, a living allowance is not required. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement of $12,100, but not the maximum requirement of $24,200.

3. Maximum Cost per MSY
Maximum costs per MSY are set forth in Table 2 below. CNCS considers cost per MSY in making funding decisions. New applicants that submit an application with a low cost per MSY and existing grantees that submit with a lower cost per MSY than currently funded may receive higher priority for funding. One MSY is equivalent to a full-time AmeriCorps position. The cost per MSY is determined by dividing the CNCS share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include childcare or the value of the education award a member may earn. The maximum cost per MSY an applicant may request is determined on an annual basis.

Table 2: 2013 Maximum Cost per MSY for School Turnaround AmeriCorps

Grant Program	Maximum
Individual Competitive State Program (cost-reimbursement)	$13,300
Multi-state (cost-reimbursement)	$13,300
Indian Tribes	$13,300
Education Award Program Fixed-amount Grant	$800
State Commission Average (of all its subgrants)	$13,300

4. Exceptions to the Maximum Cost per MSYs for School Turnaround AmeriCorps

CNCS and ED encourage applicants that propose high-quality programs to support school turnaround efforts in eligible Tribal and rural schools to apply for School Turnaround AmeriCorps. For cost-reimbursement grants, CNCS will consider a higher cost per MSY (up to $17,500) for Indian Tribes and programs that serve rural schools. Applicants must demonstrate a significant presence in rural schools measured by the number of AmeriCorps members that will be placed in rural schools to warrant a higher cost per MSY. Applicants must also include a justification in their application that demonstrates a need for the higher cost. Applicants should include this request as part of the response to the Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy section of the selection criteria.

For the purpose of this Notice, a rural school is a school located in an LEA that is eligible under the Small Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program or the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) program authorized under Title VI, Part B of the ESEA. Eligible applicants may determine whether a particular LEA is eligible for these programs by referring to information on ED's website at http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/freedom/local/reap.html.

5. Member Enrollment and Retention Requirements for Existing Grantees

We expect grantees to enroll all the members included in their grant award and pursue the highest retention rate possible. Enrollment and retention rates have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in this process. Existing AmeriCorps programs that have not achieved full enrollment in the previous year must provide an explanation and a corrective action plan in their application. We recognize retention rates may vary among equally effective programs depending on the program model. Grantees that have not achieved full retention in the most recently completed program year must provide an explanation and a corrective action plan in their application.

6. Amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award for FY 2013

AmeriCorps members serving in programs funded with FY 2013 dollars who successfully complete a term of service will receive an Education Award from the National Service Trust of $5,550 for a year of full-time service, with proportionally smaller awards for less-than-full-time service. The amount of the Education Award is determined on the basis of the Pell Grant award. A member has up to seven years after his or her term of service has ended to use the Award.

Table 3: Term of Service and FY13 Education Award

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	FY13 Education Award
Full Time	1700	$5,550
One-Year Half Time	900	$2,775
Two-Year Half Time	900	$2,775
Reduced Half Time	675	$2,114
Quarter Time	450	$1,468
Minimum Time	300	$1,175

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. How to Apply

Organizations that propose to operate only Montana apply directly to the Office of Community Service.

Organizations that propose to operate in more than one state apply directly to CNCS. Indian Tribes may apply through a State Commission, or directly to CNCS.

This Notice should be read together with the AmeriCorps regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550, the Application Instructions, and the Performance Measure Instructions which are incorporated by reference. The Notice and Application Instructions can be found at http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp. The full regulations are available online at http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2012-title45-vol4/pdf/CFR-2012-title45-vol4.pdf. The TTY number is 800-833-3722. For a printed copy of related material, call 202-606-7508.

1. Letter of Intent to Apply (Required)

A Letter of Intent (LOI) to Apply is due by 12:00 p.m MST March 25, 2013 via e-mail to serve@mt.gov SUBJECT: School Turnaround AmeriCorps. OCS will not consider LOIs received after the deadline. Failure to submit a LOI will render an applicant ineligible to apply.

The Letter of Intent to Apply should include the name of the applicant organization, address, contact person, e-mail address, and phone number. Applicants should state the type of grant for which they intend to apply.

2. Submission Dates and Times

The deadline for applications is 12:00 p.m. MST on April 8, 2013. OCS will not consider applications received after the deadline (i.e. late), except as noted below.

3. Late Applications

OCS may, at its discretion, consider an application received after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter to serve@mt.gov explaining the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay. The letter must be received no later than 12:00 p.m. MST on April 8, 2013. If the applicant experiences technical difficulties with eGrants that are unresolved, the correspondence must include the eGrants help desk ticket number. OCS will determine whether or not to accept a late application for review on a case-by-case basis.

If extenuating circumstances make the use of eGrants impossible, applicants may send a hard copy of the application to the address provided in Section VII., Agency Contact. All deadlines and requirements in this Notice apply to hard copy applications. Hard copy applications must include a cover letter detailing the circumstances that make it impossible to submit via eGrants. OCS does not accept applications submitted via fax.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

1. Submitting in eGrants
Applicants must submit their applications electronically via the CNCS web-based system, eGrants. Applicants should create an eGrants account and begin the eGrants application creation process at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the document into the appropriate eGrants fields no later than 10 days before the deadline.

Contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677 or https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask_eg if a problem arises while creating an account, or while preparing or submitting an application. National Service Hotline hours are Monday through Thursday: 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. EST. Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the Notice to which the organization is applying.

If technical issues will prevent an applicant from submitting an application on time, please contact the National Service Hotline prior to the deadline to explain the technical issue and receive a ticket number. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, the applicant must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit via eGrants. Required supporting attachments (e.g., letter(s) of support from schools and LEAs) should be emailed by the application deadline to serve@mt.gov SUBJECT: School Turnaround AmeriCorps and reference the legal applicant's name and eGrants Application ID. Include the name of the document and organization in the file name. Letter(s) of support should be submitted as a single document and not multiple files.

2. Page Limits
In eGrants, applicants will enter text in the following fields:
> • Executive Summary: a brief paragraph, maximum of a half-page Executive summaries of all compliant applications will be published on the CNCS and ED website following grant award notifications.
> • Program Design
> • Organizational Capability
> • Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
> • Evaluation Plan

Applicants may not exceed 20 double-spaced pages for the narratives, including the executive summary and cover page, as the pages print out from eGrants. This limit does not include the budget and performance measures or required supplementary materials (e.g., letters of support).

Reviewers will not consider submitted material that is over the page limit, even if eGrants allows applicants to enter and submit text over the limit. Therefore, CNCS recommends that applicants print out their application from the Review and Submit page prior to final submission to ensure it is not over the page limit.

Do not submit supplemental materials such as videos, DVDs, brochures, or any other item not requested in the Notice or application instructions. OCS will not review or return them.

C. Coordination with State and Local Education Agencies

Applicants must submit a Letter or Letters of Support from eligible partner schools and their corresponding LEAs, including evidence of the applicants' consultation with school and LEA leadership. School leadership must include the school leader responsible for leading the turnaround effort. LEA leadership may include either the superintendent or an official at the LEA responsible for SIG or priority school implementation.

The letter of support must affirm the following:

1. The applicant's program design plan is submitted in consultation with the LEA and eligible partner school(s).
2. The applicant's program design aligns with each eligible partner school's and LEA's turnaround plan.
3. Commitment to develop after the grant selection announcement a partnership agreement between the applicant and the school(s) and LEA that addresses the alignment between the applicant's program design and each school(s)' and LEA's turnaround plan, as well as the parties' plan for ongoing collaboration throughout the grant period, as detailed in Appendix B. An applicant working with multiple schools in one LEA may develop a single partnership agreement for that LEA that contains all of the elements set forth in Appendix B for each school partner within that LEA. The partnership agreement does not need to be completed at the time of the application submission but it must be available upon request at the time of receiving the award.

The letter of support must also include the name and National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) identification number of each eligible partner school with which the applicant will be working.

D. Funding Restrictions

Grants under this program, except for EAP grants, are subject to the applicable Cost Principles under OMB Circulars A-21 (2 CFR Part 220), A-122 (2 CFR Part 230), or A-87 (2 CFR Part 225). All grants are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements for grants under A-102 (45 CFR Part 2541) or A-110 (45 CFR 2543 or 2 CFR Part 21) and OMB Circular A-133, pertaining to the Single Audit Act.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Assessment Criteria

Reviewers will be asked to assess the quality and comprehensiveness of the response to each criterion as a whole.

1. Program Design (50 percent)

The desired outcomes of School Turnaround AmeriCorps are to improve the academic performance, academic engagement, and/or attendance outcomes of students in eligible schools. In assessing Program Design, reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant demonstrates how AmeriCorps members are particularly well-suited to deliver effective turnaround interventions and achieve the desired student outcomes in these schools.

All applications must identify the schools that will participate in grant activities and demonstrate that they will serve eligible schools not currently served by a national service program (e.g. AmeriCorps State and National, VISTA, or Foster Grandparents Program) or will support expansion and better coordination of existing national service activities in those schools to be considered eligible for funds.

a. AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Support and Sustain School Turnaround Efforts
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
- • Need(s) identified by eligible partner school(s) and LEA leadership.
- • Description of AmeriCorps member activities.
- • The number of AmeriCorps members requested under the proposed project.
- • The types of slots (service terms) needed for these members. If requesting different slot types, explain how the different slot types align with the program design and activities.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:
- • The extent to which the number and type of AmeriCorps members is reasonable in relation to the program design, activities, and objectives.
- • The extent to which the applicant has demonstrated that the use of AmeriCorps members is a suitable and effective means for accomplishing objectives that it would not otherwise accomplish through existing staff and/or volunteers.
- • The extent to which the potential contribution of AmeriCorps members addresses the needs identified by eligible school and LEA leadership.
- • For applicants that propose to serve multiple school sites, the extent to which the applicant coordinates its turnaround efforts among those sites and takes advantage of the scale of the project (e.g., through economies of scale).
- • The extent to which the project addresses multiple student needs and is aligned with comprehensive school turnaround plans, including the extent to which the proposed project incorporates at least one, or preferably more than one, of the following:
    - o Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.
    - o Establishing a school culture and environment that improves school safety, attendance, and discipline and addresses other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs.
    - o Accelerating students' acquisition of reading and mathematics knowledge and skills.
    - o Increasing graduation rates through strategies such as early warning systems, credit-recovery programs and re-engagement strategies.
    - o Increasing college enrollment rates through college preparation counseling assistance to include completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and college applications, and educating students and their families on financial literacy for college.
    - o Supporting school implementation of increased learning time.

b. Evidence-Informed and Measurable Impact
All applications must demonstrate that the proposed project would use evidence-informed interventions. An intervention is evidence-informed if it is supported by evidence of promise or a strong theory. The definitions of these levels of evidence are provided in Appendix A of this Notice.

When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
- • The evidence supporting the intervention.
- • National Performance Measure targets and the determination for these targets.

• Plan for collecting data, reporting outcomes, and using data to target services.
• For Existing AmeriCorps Programs Only: Outline the existing AmeriCorps program impact, including a description of the performance outcomes against objectives during the last full year of program operation. If performance outcomes were not met, provide an explanation and demonstrate a plan for improvement.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:
• The extent to which the objectives and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.
• Whether the interventions AmeriCorps members and volunteers will engage in are evidence-informed.
• The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the proposed project likely will have a notable positive impact as measured by the importance or magnitude of the effect on improving student academic performance, academic engagement, and/or attendance outcomes.
• The extent to which the intervention will be targeted to students based on needs.
• The extent to which the applicant convincingly links the identified need, proposed member and volunteer interventions, and the anticipated outcomes.
• The extent to which the applicant has established plans to measure and collect reporting requirement data and National Performance Measure outcomes and outputs.

c. AmeriCorps Member Recruitment
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
• Plans for recruiting and selecting AmeriCorps members for the program.
• Applicant's plans for recruiting members from the local communities to be served or traditionally underrepresented AmeriCorps member populations, including applicant's history of working with traditionally underrepresented AmeriCorps member populations or plans to ensure success if this is a new member population being recruited. Underrepresented member populations may include new Americans, low-income individuals, youth from disadvantaged backgrounds (sometimes also referred to as "opportunity youth"), rural residents, older Americans, veterans, people of color, Native Americans, and people with disabilities.
• Plans to coordinate the recruitment and selection of AmeriCorps members with school leadership and staff.
• Tutoring Programs Only: A demonstration of how the program complies with AmeriCorps qualification requirements for tutoring programs. See 45 CFR §§ 2522.900-2522.950.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:
• The extent to which the AmeriCorps member recruitment plan is likely to be effective.
• The extent to which the program demonstrates it will recruit and select AmeriCorps members that have the relevant experience, qualifications and/or skills to provide the service activities in which they will be engaged.
• The extent to which the application has a plan and infrastructure to recruit AmeriCorps members from the local communities to be served by the program or from traditionally underrepresented populations.

d. AmeriCorps Member Training
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:

• Plans for orienting members to AmeriCorps, the community they are serving, their placement site(s), and the service they will perform.
• Plans for providing members with opportunities to share best practices and lessons learned to promote effectiveness of interventions.
• Plans for ongoing training, including anticipated training topics and the timeline, provided to AmeriCorps members throughout the term of service and the skills the AmeriCorps members will acquire during the term of service, including training on prohibited activities.
• Plans to coordinate the training of AmeriCorps members with school leadership and staff.
• Tutoring Programs Only: A demonstration of how the program complies with AmeriCorps training requirements for tutoring programs. See 45 CFR §§ 2522.900-2522.950.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:
• The adequacy of the AmeriCorps member orientation and ongoing training to prepare members for service activities they will perform and to ensure their success.
• Whether AmeriCorps members and generated volunteers are made aware of the rules regarding prohibited activities.
• The extent to which the member orientation and training is coordinated with school leadership and staff.

e. AmeriCorps Member Supervision
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
• Plan for supervising AmeriCorps members, including identifying who will supervise the AmeriCorps members.
• Plan for selecting and training supervisors of AmeriCorps members.
• Plans to coordinate the supervision of AmeriCorps members with school leadership and staff.
• Tutoring Programs Only: A demonstration of how the program complies with AmeriCorps supervision requirements for tutoring programs. See 45 CFR §§ 2522.900-2522.950.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:
• The extent to which the supervision plan ensures that AmeriCorps members will receive adequate support and guidance throughout the program year.
• The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the supervisors.
• The extent to which the member supervision is coordinated with school leadership and staff.

f. Member Experience
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
• The program component(s) that enable AmeriCorps members to have service experiences that produce community impact and lead to continued civic participation.
• The program component(s) that foster an AmeriCorps identity and connectivity with other AmeriCorps and national service participants.
• Plans for providing members with opportunities to share best practices and lessons learned that encourages AmeriCorps members' sustained participation in the ongoing efforts to turn around the nation's lowest-performing schools.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:

• The extent to which the applicant will foster an AmeriCorps identity for its members, specifically members identifying as such to community members, partners, and the general public.

• The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it will provide opportunities for members to reflect on and learn from their service in a manner that fosters a connection to the school turnaround efforts around the nation.

• The extent to which the program is likely to promote a lifelong ethic of service and continued civic participation amongst AmeriCorps members.

g. Organizational Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
• The efforts taken to produce a strong AmeriCorps brand for this project.
• Plan for using the AmeriCorps name and logo on websites, service gear, and public materials, including use by subgrantees, affiliates, or service locations.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factor:
• The extent to which the organization demonstrates a commitment to branding national service, particularly by building a strong AmeriCorps program identity within the grantee, subgrantees, affiliates, and/or service locations.

h. Strategic Consideration
CNCS seeks to build a diversified portfolio as outlined in Section V.B. Applicants must indicate which strategic considerations they meet in order to be considered for CNCS's assessment of the stated strategic considerations. Programs must demonstrate significant program focus, design, and impact to meet the strategic considerations.

2. Organizational Capability (25 percent)

a. Organizational Background and Staffing
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
• The applicant's mission and a brief description of its history.
• The program staffing and management structure.
• Roles, responsibilities and relevant experience of staff. If positions are currently vacant, please describe the desired qualifications for each open position.
• Plans for providing financial and programmatic orientation and training and technical assistance to staff.
• The applicant's prior experience administering AmeriCorps grants or other federal funds.
• The applicant's record of launching new initiatives and/or scaling initiatives.
• For Existing AmeriCorps Programs Only: A description of how the AmeriCorps program is integrated and supported within the organization, including evidence of how well the organization has managed the program, its performance, and its record of compliance and responsiveness.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:
• The extent to which the organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan, implement, and evaluate the proposed project.

• The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the key program personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.
• The extent to which the organization has the necessary plans and infrastructure to provide programmatic and fiscal oversight, day-to-day operational support, and data collection.

b. Sustainability
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
• Involvement of eligible school and LEA leadership in designing and implementing the program.
• Plans for building partnerships and capacity to support the project.
• The applicant's track record raising funds to support service activities and initiatives.
• Plans for ensuring that the impact of the program will extend beyond the grant period.
• The percentage of the applicant's total organization operational budget this proposed funding request from CNCS represents.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:
• Likelihood of effectiveness of the applicant's plan for securing school and community support for, and involvement in, the proposed project.
• Likelihood of the project contributing to the sustainability of school turnaround efforts beyond the grant period.

c. Compliance and Accountability
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
• Plans to prevent and detect compliance issues related to AmeriCorps rules and regulations, including those related to prohibited activities.
• Plan for holding the organization, subgrantees, and service site locations accountable if instances of risk or noncompliance are identified.
• For Current Grantees and Former Grantees Only: A demonstration of compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations. Describe any compliance issues and areas of weakness/risk identified during the last full year of program operation at the organization, subgrantees, and service site locations. Provide an explanation of the issue/weakness and describe the corrective action(s) taken and, as appropriate, plan(s) for improvement. Provide the AmeriCorps member enrollment and retention rate for the last full year of program operation. If either was less than 100% provide an explanation, and describe a
plan for improvement.
 o Enrollment rate is calculated as slots filled plus refill slots filled divided by slots awarded.
 o Retention rate is calculated as the number of AmeriCorps members exited with award (full or partial award) divided by the number of AmeriCorps members enrolled.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factor:
• The extent to which the organization has the ability and structure to ensure compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations, including those related to prohibited activities at the grantee, subgrantee, and service location level.

d. Continuous Improvement
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:

• Plans for soliciting timely and regular feedback from internal and external stakeholders including school and LEA staff, students, and families, to inform continuous improvement efforts.
• Plans for using data on student academic performance, academic engagement, and/or behavioral outcomes to inform continuous improvement.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:
• The extent to which the continuous improvement plan will include the use of data or performance feedback.
• The extent to which the continuous improvement plan will permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes and opportunity for ongoing corrections.

3. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)

a. Cost Effectiveness
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
• A demonstration that the costs are reasonable in relation to the scope, scale, and impact of the proposed project.
• A discussion of how the program is a cost-effective approach to address the need and achieve the stated objectives. Consider the total costs and benefits of the program and, to the extent possible, document the costs and benefits. Compare the cost effectiveness of the program with the costs and benefits of alternative models or approaches (if available), and demonstrate how the program model is most cost effective. For further information on cost effectiveness analysis, see OMB "Circular No. A-94 Revised" (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a094).
• A description of how the resources requested will supplement, and not supplant, SIG funding or other existing school funding streams.
• For existing AmeriCorps programs: All existing AmeriCorps programs requesting a higher cost per MSY than previous years must include a compelling rationale for this increased cost. This applies even if the increased cost per MSY is less than the maximum or if the increase is due to increased costs associated with the grant.
• If any of the special circumstances stated below have an impact on the organizational capability that has not already been discussed, please describe the circumstance and how it affects cost effectiveness.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:
• The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (Note that an applicant with a low cost per member has a competitive advantage under this criterion. Applicants with a program design that achieves equal results at a lower cost will be advantaged over programs that achieve similar results at a higher cost.)
• Special Circumstances: CNCS may take into account the following circumstances of individual programs: program age; the extent to which the program expands to new sites; whether the program is located in a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of corporate or philanthropic resources; whether the program is located in a high-cost, economically distressed community, measured by applying appropriate Federal and state data; and whether the

reasonable and necessary costs of the program are higher because they are associated with engaging or serving difficult-to-reach populations, or achieving greater program impact as evidenced through performance measures and program evaluation.

b. Budget Adequacy
When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
> • Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project.
> • Discuss the adequacy of the budget to support the program design and objectives.
> • Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments (in-kind and cash) secured to date and the sources of these commitments. Indicate plans for securing additional resource commitments, potential sources, and timeline.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:
> • The extent to which the budget is clear and in alignment with the program narrative.
> • The extent to which the budget includes sufficient resources to carry out the program effectively.
> • The extent to which the program will obtain financial and in-kind resources to support program implementation.
> • Whether an applicant adequately budgets for its required share of costs.

For EAP Grants Only:
The extent to which a current grantee is increasing its share of costs will not be considered in assessing an EAP application. However, all other indicators described under Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy apply. It will be weighted 25% of the total application.

When addressing this criterion, please provide the following information:
> • Discussion of how the program will raise the additional resources needed to manage and operate an AmeriCorps program beyond the fixed-amount.
> • The total amount budgeted to operate the program, including the fixed-amount from CNCS and grantee share and how the program determined that amount. Keep in mind that full-time AmeriCorps program costs include expenditures for the AmeriCorps living allowance, health care, and criminal history checks. Programs are not required to pay living allowances or cover health care for less-than-full-time members, but must conduct criminal history checks.
> • Demonstration that the applicant has planned for total costs. Reviewers will assess the adequacy of the plan to secure resources to support the program design.

B. Goals of the review and selection process
The assessment of applications involves a wide range of factors and considerations. In the end, the review and selection process is intended to produce a diversified set of high-quality programs that demonstrate a commitment to assist in turning around the lowest-performing schools and represent the priorities and selection factors described in this Notice.

Specifically, the review and selection process will:

1. Identify eligible applications that satisfy the following consideration:
> • High alignment with criteria.

2. Consider:
- State Commission rank and recommendations on single-state applicants.
- The strength of the evidence base for the program.
- Relative risk and opportunity.

3. Yield a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
- Geographic representation.
- Representation of:
  - o Eligible SIG and priority schools.
  - o Rural and urban eligible schools.
  - o Diverse program sizes as measured by the number of AmeriCorps members.
  - o Eligible elementary, middle, and high schools.
  - o Single and multi-state programs.

- Organizations and/or program models that recruit and engage traditionally underrepresented populations as AmeriCorps members and expand opportunities to serve as AmeriCorps members; particularly new Americans, low-income individuals, economically disadvantaged young adults (also referred to as "opportunity youth"), rural residents, older Americans, veterans, communities of color, Native Americans, and people with disabilities.

Applicants must check the relevant boxes in the Performance Measure tab in eGrants in order to be considered for CNCS's assessment of the above strategic considerations.

C. Stages in the review and selection process
Office of Community Service Review
Applicants submitting proposals to serve the state of Montana only will first be subject to review at the state commission level. The purpose of the state level review is to determine the rank of applications and which proposals will be forwarded to the CNCS to continue the review process. **Not all applications submitted to the commission will necessarily be selected to continue the review process**. The state review process will consist of:
   a) A review by commission staff for general compliance with pertaining state and federal regulations as well as responsibility to the request for proposal
   b) Applications passing staff review will next be reviewed by a grant review committee made up of members of the Montana Commission on Community Service as well as an outside reviewer. The grant review committee will score applications and make ranking recommendations to the full Montana Commission.
   c) Grant review committee rankings will be voted on by the full Montana Commission. The vote of the Commission will determine which proposals will continue the review process by being submitted to CNCS
   d) After revisions, proposals will be submitted to CNCS to continue the review process

CNCS Review
1. Compliance and Eligibility Review
All applications will be reviewed to determine compliance with eligibility, deadline, and completeness requirements. In order to be compliant and advance to the application assessment, an applicant must satisfy all of the following requirements:
- Submit a Notice of Intent to Apply by the deadline: March 25, 2013 (see Section IV.A.1 and IV.A.2);

• Submit an application by the application submission deadline: April 8, 2013;
• Submit letter(s) of support via email by the application deadline (see Section IV.B.1 and IV.C.); and,
• Submit an application that is complete, in that it contains all required elements and follows the instructions provided in this Notice.

2. Application Assessment
External reviewers, ED staff, and CNCS staff will conduct a joint review. All reviewers will be screened for conflict of interest. Reviewers will assess Program Design, particularly focusing on evidence of effectiveness for the proposed solution(s) to support and sustain school turnaround efforts, appropriateness of national service as a solution, and potential quality of the member experience; Organizational Capability; and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy. Reviewers will assess, based on the selection criteria, the comprehensiveness and feasibility of the application.

Following the assessment, some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information. Clarifying information is used in making final recommendations. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to requests for information in a timely fashion will result in the removal of applications from consideration. Applicants will have approximately 5 business days to provide a response for clarification.

3. Post-Review Quality Control (Quality Control)
Some applications may be selected for a Quality Control assessment. This additional level of review may be used to assess applications for which there are significant panel anomalies.

Applications identified for additional assessment will receive a Quality Control review. The Quality Control reviewer provides an assessment of the application's key strengths and weaknesses.

4. Selection for Funding
With the goal of a diversified portfolio, the CNCS Chief Executive Officer will select the final portfolio based on the results of the application review process and after consultation with representatives from ED. In selecting grantees, CNCS and ED will factor in strategic considerations (as noted in Section V.B.) to ensure that there is diversity among successful applications.

5. Feedback to Applicants
Following grant awards, each applicant will receive summary feedback on their application. Feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect any information that may have been provided during clarification.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notice
CNCS will award grants following the grant selection announcement. We anticipate announcing the results of this competition no later than mid-July 2013.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements
The Notice of Grant Award incorporates the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant as well as the AmeriCorps regulations and grant provisions.

C. Project/Award Period
> • The project start date may not occur prior to the date CNCS awards the grant.
> • AmeriCorps members may not enroll prior to the start date of the award.
> • AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant award.
> • A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.
> • The project period must align with the 2013-2014 academic school year.
> • CNCS typically awards grant no earlier than August 1st.

CNCS generally makes grant awards for three years, with funding in annual increments. Grantees will be eligible for non-competitive continuation funding in the second and third year, contingent on the availability of sufficient appropriations, compliance with grant requirements, and satisfactory performance.

CNCS and ED reserve the right to adjust the amount of an additional grant award in subsequent years, or elect not to continue funding, on these bases.

D. Use of Material
To ensure that materials generated with CNCS funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, CNCS reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so. 45 CFR §§ 2543.36; 2541.30

E. Reporting Requirements
Grantees with cost-reimbursement grants are required to provide semiannual progress reports, semiannual financial reports, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §§ 2522.500-2522.540 and §§ 2522.700-2522.740. Fixed-amount grantees are required to provide semiannual performance reports and an internal or external evaluation report. All grantees provide quarterly expense reports through the Payment Management System (PMS) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Grantees that receive an award directly from CNCS will be required to report at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over $25,000 and may be required to report on executive compensation for their organization and for their subgrantees. Grantees must have the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. See 2 CFR Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply.

Progress Report Data
In addition to reporting outcomes and progress toward the grant approved performance measures, additional data must be reported semiannually (as applicable). These include:
- List of schools that were served, including their NCES identification numbers and the number of members placed at each school.
- Number of schools served, including:
  - o # of SIG schools
  - o # of priority schools
  - o # of urban schools
  - o # of rural schools
  - o # of elementary schools, middle schools, and/or high schools
- Number of students served, including:
  - o # of English Learners
  - o # of students with disabilities
- Number of volunteers leveraged.
- Number of individuals that applied to be AmeriCorps members

F. National Evaluation
CNCS will conduct a national evaluation of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program. Approved applicants must participate in the national evaluation conducted by CNCS. Participation in the national evaluation will satisfy the program's evaluation requirements for the School Turnaround AmeriCorps. As part of the national evaluation, grantees may be asked to share or collect additional school and student data. CNCS will provide further information once the evaluation design is finalized.

G. Re-Focusing of Funding
CNCS reserves the right to re-focus funding in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.

VII. AGENCY CONTACT
- This Notice is available at http://serve.mt.gov
- For further information 406-444-5547
- For questions regarding multi-state or Indian Tribe applications submitted directly to CNCS, please call (202) 606-7508 or send an e-mail to americorpsgrants@cns.gov
- Single-state applicants with questions should contact the Governor's Office of Community Service

The mailing address is:

Governor's Office of Community Service
ATT: Grants Coordinator
PO Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION TO KNOW BEFORE APPLYING
In addition to consulting the Notice and AmeriCorps regulations as directed in these instructions applicants may also consult the OCS website for Frequently Asked Questions, and other resources.

IX. NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR SCHOOL TURNAROUND AMERICORPS PROGRAMS
AmeriCorps programs are required to have at least one outcome measure aligned with each output measure they select. Applicants are required to select from the priority measures. Applicants may select additional optional complementary measures. The opt-in rules provide guidance to applicants by indicating the required or recommended pairing, or alignment, of output and outcome measures.

SCHOOL TURNAROUND AMERICORPS PRIORITY MEASURES
ED2: Number of students that completed participation in CNCS-supported K-12 education programs
ED4A: Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that were sustained by the CNCS-supported program for at least the required time period
ED5: Number of students with improved academic performance in literacy and/or math
ED6: Number of students that improved their school attendance over the course of the CNCS-supported program's involvement with the student
ED27: Number of students in grades K-12 that participated in the mentoring or tutoring or other education program, including CNCS-supported service learning, who demonstrated improved academic engagement

SCHOOL TURNAROUND AMERICORPS COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES
ED1: Number of students who start in a CNCS-supported education program
ED3A: Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that are commenced by CNCS-supported programs
ED7: Number of students with no or decreased disciplinary referrals and suspensions over the course of the CNCS-supported programs' involvement
ED9: Number of students graduating from high school on time with a diploma
ED10: Number of students entering post-secondary institutions

In addition to the above measures, applicants may opt in to track the following SIG outcomes. For purposes of eGrants, these are considered applicant-determined measures.

SCHOOL TURNAROUND AMERICORPS COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES
SIG 1: Number of minutes within the school year
SIG 2: Number and percentage of students completing advanced coursework (e.g., AP/IB), early-college high schools, or dual enrollment classes
SIG 3: Dropout rate
SIG 4: Truants

A. Opt-In Rules

Choose one output and then at least one of the corresponding outcomes. Applicants may choose additional outcomes.

CNCS Strategic Category	Output (Choose ONE)	Outcome (Choose at least one)	Supplemental Outcomes optional)
Strategic Plan Objective 2: Succeeding in K-12 (Tutoring and Other Education Programs)	ED 2: Number of students who completed participation in a CNCS-supported K-12 education program	ED5, ED6, or ED27	ED7, ED 9, ED10, SIG 1, SIG 2, SIG 3 or SIG 4
Strategic Plan Objective 2: Succeeding in K-12 (Mentoring Programs)	ED4A: Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that were sustained by the CNCS-supported program for at least the required time period	ED5, ED6, or ED27	ED7, ED 9, ED10, SIG 1, SIG 2, SIG 3 or SIG 4

APPENDIX A EVIDENCE BASIS GUIDANCE

Evidence-Informed
Logic model (also referred to as theory of change) means a well-specified conceptual framework that identifies key components of the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice (i.e., the active "ingredients" that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the relationships among the key components and outcomes, theoretically and operationally.

Strong theory means a rationale for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice that includes a logic model.

Evidence of promise means there is empirical evidence to support the theoretical linkage(s) between at least one critical component and at least one relevant outcome presented in the logic model for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice. Specifically, evidence of promise means the conditions in paragraphs (a) and (b) are met:

      a) There is at least one study that is a:
            1. Correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias;
            2. Quasi-experimental study that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations; or
            3. Randomized controlled trial that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with or without reservations.

      b) The study referenced in paragraph (a) found a statistically significant or substantively important (defined as a difference of 0.25 standard deviations or larger), favorable association between at least one critical component and one relevant outcome presented in the logic model for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice.

Quasi-experimental study means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental design by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. These studies, depending on design and implementation, can meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations (they cannot meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations).

Randomized controlled trial means a study that employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, schools, or districts to receive the intervention being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the intervention (the control group). The estimated effectiveness of the intervention is the difference between the average outcome for the treatment group and for the control group. These studies, depending on design and implementation, can meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

See What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 2.1, September 2011), which can currently be found at the following link: ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/DocumentSum.aspx?sid=19.

APPENDIX B Written Partnership Agreements

All awardees are required to develop and maintain written partnership agreements among an eligible school or schools, LEA, and community-based partners working together to implement the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program. These agreements will articulate the alignment between the local School Turnaround AmeriCorps program design and school and LEA turnaround plans, as well as the parties' plan for ongoing collaboration throughout the grant period. These agreements must be made available to CNCS upon request.

The partnership agreements must be consistent with the awarded application plans, and articulate how the key entities responsible for program implementation will work together along the following elements of high-quality partnerships between eligible schools, LEAs, and community-based organizations:

> • Managing collaboratively. Jointly establishing program direction and priorities, planning, budgeting, training and aligning program staff, communicating across the partnership, and continuously improving program services.
> • Sharing data and evaluation. Sharing information, data, performance measures, and evaluation strategies that guide project management, resource allocation, and service delivery while maintaining data privacy requirements.
> • Sharing resources. Jointly using resources such as staff, funding, administrative systems, school facilities, curricula, and instructional materials.
> • Clarifying and communicating roles and responsibilities. Clearly articulating roles and responsibilities for each partner organization to help optimize program services and limited resources.

In addition, partnership agreements must also address the following strategies, when applicable:
> • Aligning in-school and out-of-school. Coordinating to ensure that out-of-school academic and enrichment efforts complement in-school instruction and programming.
> • Coordinating on safety, health, and student supports. Coordinating to promote school and community safety, reinforce health and wellness programming, and provide necessary student supports.
> • Cooperating on family engagement. Coordinating interactions with families to strengthen positive family engagement that reinforces learning in multiple settings.
> • Coordinating among CBOs. Coordinating and establishing agreements between multiple community-based organizations (CBOs) when working with the same schools and students.

Additional Required Materials

Letter of Intent

Montana Commission on Community Service

2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps Grant Application

Name of Applicant Organization:

Organization Address:

City/State/Zip:

Telephone:

E-mail Address:

(Note: to apply all AmeriCorps programs must have access to the Internet)

Organization Mission Statement:

Proposed Program Title:

Proposed Program Executive Summary:

Please provide a one-paragraph summary of the proposed program. This summary must be one-half page or less and should include who, what, when, and why:

- Who will be serving? Who will be served?
- What will the AmeriCorps members do?
- Where will the activity take place?
- When does the project begin and end?
- What is the expected outcome(s) of the project?

Proposed Program CNCS Focus Area(s):

Contact Person:

Submit electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST March 25th, 2013** to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant. *Note: If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-5547 to confirm the information was received.*

The Governor's Office of Community Service will invite applicants with past experience (successful) and or a strong Readiness Self-Assessment, and who address CNCS Focus Areas and State Expectations to continue with the application process.

Readiness Self-Assessment (New Applicants)

Montana Commission on Community Service
2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps Grant Application

Is My Organization Ready to Apply for an AmeriCorps Grant?

This Readiness Assessment asks simple questions to help you determine whether your organization is poised to successfully apply for and implement an AmeriCorps grant. Read each question carefully and answer honestly. This assessment is a tool to help you plan for the implementation and administration of an AmeriCorps grant-funded program.

Completion of the assessment does not guarantee AmeriCorps funding through the Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS) or the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).The Readiness Self-Assessment will be used by the Governor's Office of Community Service to determine if the organization is financially ready for an AmeriCorps Grant.

Fundamental Questions:

Is your organization a public or private nonprofit organization - including labor organizations, faith-based and other community organizations; an institution of higher education; a government entity within the State of Montana; an Indian Tribe; or a partnership or consortia?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Does your organization's plan for utilizing AmeriCorps members address specific unmet community needs in the area of education?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

If the answer to either of the above questions is "No" then your organization would not be eligible to receive an AmeriCorps grant or serve as a Host Site for AmeriCorps members.

Additionally you are ineligible if your organization is a 501 (c)(4) non-profit entity [under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501 (c)(4)] that engages in lobbying.

Does your plan for utilizing AmeriCorps members call for members to provide service exclusively within the state of Montana?

_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

If the answer to the above question is "No" then your program would not be eligible to receive funding through the Montana Governor's Office of Community Service. If the rest of the self-assessment is favorable, then your organization may be interested in applying directly to the Corporation for National and Community Service for an AmeriCorps National Direct grant. If

your organization does apply directly to the Corporation for National and Community Service please contact the Governor's Office of Community Service for more information on submitting a multi-state/national consultation form.

Administrative Competencies:

Does your organization have a proven track record of establishing measurable outcomes for its programs?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Does your organization have the infrastructure to recruit, train, and support the efforts of AmeriCorps members? Variables include office space, technology, supervisory time & skill, financial expertise, and the ability to manage volunteers.
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Has your organization previously managed a major federal, state, or foundation grant?
_____Yes   _____No

Does your organization have formal internal controls governing all financial operations?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Does your organization have sufficient cash on hand or credit to operate a major grant on a reimbursement basis?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Has your organization been audited by a Certified Public Accounting firm within the past two years?
_____Yes   _____No

If you answered "No" to any of the above questions, it is likely your organization would struggle to successfully administer an AmeriCorps grant. Consideration should be given to seeking a partnership with an existing AmeriCorps program in Montana. Serving as an AmeriCorps host site rather than as a primary grant applicant is often a better option for smaller organizations. Contact the Governor's Office of Community Service for more details.

Mission Statement:
1. Does your organization have a clear written mission statement? (if no, skip to question 6)
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

2. Do all organizational programs and efforts align with the mission?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

3. Has your organization said no to potentially good opportunities which are not consistent with the organization's mission?

_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

4. Is the mission understood by all stakeholders within the organization?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

5. Is the mission frequently referred to (e.g. in planning sessions and other meetings)?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Governance & Operations:
6. Does your organization have an active and independent board of directors and/or other governing body? (Independent is defined as a majority of board members who are neither employees of the organization nor family members of employees or other board members.)
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

7. Does the organization have written policies and procedures, including a conflict of interest policy for employees and directors?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

8. Does your organization plan to use existing staff to manage the AmeriCorps program?
   _____Yes   _____No

Strategic Planning:
9. Does your organization have a strategic plan for the future i.e. 3-10 year strategic plan? (if no, skip to question 13)
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

10. Does the strategic plan have well defined measurable goals and achievable action steps with timeframes?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

11. Are the goals in the strategic plan well known and understood by the staff and board?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

12. Is the strategic plan made actionable by realistic and detailed annual plans that outline the specific work to be accomplished?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

13. Does the organization conduct regular assessment of internal operations to assess efficiency and effectiveness?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Financial Management:
14. Do you have a "job cost" or "fund based" accounting system?
   _____Yes   _____No   Current system used: _____

15. If your organization uses accrual basis accounting, are there procedures in place to allow for reconciliation between cash and accrual basis reports?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

16. Is your organization's accounting system manual, automated, or a combination?
_____Manual   _____Automated   _____Combination

17. Are entries posted to the general ledger?
_____Daily   _____Weekly   _____Monthly

_____Unsure   _____Other (Please describe):_____

18. Does the accounting system track completely and accurately the receipt and disbursement of funds by each grant or funding source?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

19. Does your accounting system allow cash basis reporting and for the recording of "in-kind" contributions?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

20. Does the organization have a development/fundraising plan in place?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

21. Does the organization have plans to secure the financial and in-kind resources to meet required matches?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

22. Is your organization familiar with federal cost principles?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

23. Is your organization familiar with procedures for the determination and allowance of costs in connection with Corporation for National and Community Service grants and contracts?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Technology:
24. Does every key staff member have access to a computer with up-to-date software, internet access, and e-mail capabilities?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

25. Is all staff able to find and use resources posted online?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Human Resources:
26. Does your organization have a well-planned process to recruit, develop, and retain the best employees in accordance with an equal opportunity environment?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

27. Does your organization provide staff and volunteers with written job descriptions and the necessary resources to carry out duties appropriately?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

28. Are time and activity distribution records (time sheets) maintained by funding source and project type for each employee to account for total hours with your organization?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

29. Does the organization provide relevant and regular training for staff and board members?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

30. Are employee performance appraisals conducted on a consistent and fair basis?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

31. Does your organization have a well-planned process to recruit, develop, and retain volunteers?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Internal Controls:
32. Are the duties of the bookkeeper and record keeper separate from cash functions (receipts, deposits, check signing/releasing)?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

33. Are checks signed by individual(s) whose duties exclude recording cash received, approving vouchers for payment, and the preparation of payroll?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

34. Are purchase approval methods documented and communicated?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

35. Are employee payroll reports supported by appropriately signed documentation (timesheets, leave slips, etc.)?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

36. Are employees who handle funds bonded against loss by reasons of fraud or dishonesty?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Organizational Needs Assessment and Implementation:
37. Does your organization conduct regular community needs assessments?
_____Yes   _____No   Date Last Conducted: _____

38. Does your organization analyze and use the results of needs assessments to chart change?
_____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

39. Are your organization's programs and services well defined?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Measuring Performance and Continual Improvement of Programs:
40. Does your organization have a comprehensive well-developed community assessment or evaluation system used to measure the impact of programs and services?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

41. Does your organization conduct regular community assessments of existing programs' effectiveness in meeting recipient needs and identify areas for improvement?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

42. Does your organization collect data to measure performance and progress on a continual basis?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

43. Is data analyzed, used in program redesign and communicated to stakeholders on a regular basis? (e.g. annual report)
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Partnership and Collaboration:
44. Does your organization participate in partnerships with other groups?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

45. Have these relationships led to mutually beneficial collaborations?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Unsure

Faith Based Organizations:
If the conditions below are not acceptable to your organization, Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) funding is probably not a good option:
✓ Participation in CNCS funded programs must be open to all who qualify, without regard to religious beliefs
✓ CNCS funded programs cannot require members or participants to engage in religious activities
✓ CNCS funded positions must not proselytize
✓ CNCS funded programs must be held in a separate place or time from religious activities

---

Submit electronically, along with a current A-133 audit or equivalent to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST March 25th, 2013** to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant.

Cover Letter

Montana Commission on Community Service

2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps Grant Application

Name of Applicant Organization:
Type of Organization (Nonprofit, Government, etc.):
Federal Employer Identification No (FEIN):

Proposed Program Title:

Proposed Program Executive Summary: (If different than Letter of Intent)

Proposed Program CNCS Focus Area(s): (If different than Letter of Intent)

Proposed Program Montana Initiatives:
(Plans to incorporate the Montana Initiatives into the proposed program? If yes, how?)

CNCS Funds Requested:

Total Project Budget (funds requested + match):

Indirect Cost Rate: (If included in the budget please submit a federally approved indirect cost rate agreement)

Current Applicants:(Describe the successes and highlights of your program over the past grant year.)

Contact Person:

Submit electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST April 8th, 2013** to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant. *Note: If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-5547 to confirm the information was received.*

Thank you for your interest, we look forward to reviewing your proposal!